P6

CHRISTIANS AND ATOMIC WAR

★

A Discussion of the Moral Aspects of Defence and Disarmament in the Nuclear Age

★

THE BRITISH COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

10 Eaton Gate, Sloane Square, London, S.W.1

Two Shillings

NOTE

This pamphlet has been written on the basis of discussions in a group appointed by the International Department of the British Council of Churches. The membership of the group is given on the inside back cover. The responsibility of the group is defined by the following resolution by the Council at its autumn meeting in October, 1957:

> The Council further requests the International Department to set up a special group from its own membership and from people related to defence policy which should give continuous study to the moral aspects of the disarmament problem and of defence policy in the light of nuclear armament, with a view to advising the Council from time to time on these matters.

There is no suggestion that the Department, or the Council, necessarily endorses the opinions expressed. The Council at a meeting held on April 22nd, 1959, passed the following resolution in regard to it:

> **The Council receives the pamphlet entitled 'Christians and Atomic War' and authorises its publication, commending it for careful study of the issues raised.**

Chapter I

The Purpose of the Pamphlet

This pamphlet is offered as a contribution to Christian thinking on the disarmament problem and defence policy in the nuclear age. It is designed to encourage responsible reflection and political action by individuals. This is the necessary basis of responsible statements by church groups, whether local or national.

The pamphlet starts with the fact of power in the relationship between nations, and particularly with the political and military decisions which Britain must take in its own defence, and in the interest of the wider policies with which it is in sympathy, and the nations with which it is allied. It continues with a statement of the Christian approach and the consequent areas of decision for Christians.

Political and technical factors are emphasised in order to give concreteness, the lack of which often makes Christian judgments weak or irrelevant. There is also the hope of enlarging the common ground with men of good will who do not look at the problem as churchmen.

OTHER VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT

It is not suggested that the argument of this pamphlet on defence and disarmament is the only possible one for Christians. Many lines of study and discussion sprang from the original initiative of the British Council of Churches, when it published *The Era of Atomic Power* in 1946. No attempt has been made to go over the ground of that very able report.

The study of 'the *moral aspects* of the disarmament problem and of defence policy in the light of nuclear armament' can be variously interpreted. Perhaps it is worth noting three other ways of doing so, which are complementary to the one chosen by the group.

1. It is a valid Christian position to suggest that full Christian obedience involves the refusal to participate in war. This approach to the problem of war has acquired much wider recognition 'in the light of nuclear armament'. The known horrors of Hiroshima, the anticipated horrors of nuclear war on a vastly more destructive scale, and the largely unknown dangers for the future health of mankind in the testing of nuclear weapons, have enormously strengthened the argument that Christians should say 'No' to war of this kind and

therefore to war as it is likely to be waged from now on. Those who take this view recognise that it involves them in the agonising dilemma of being inescapably involved in society and yet contracting out of some of their obligations to it. They feel compelled to take this line, not merely in rebellion against society, but in obedience to God; and, though they do not make light of the possible consequences of this for themselves or—still more seriously—for others, they believe that these consequences must be left in the hands of a God Who, in requiring such obedience, will not allow the purpose of His Kingdom to fail. This view is represented within our group; yet the group as a whole was not able to offer it as a sufficient answer to the questions before it. Christian pacifism can be defended in terms of an individual act of obedience and faith. It has not—in the view of the group—found clear articulation in terms of a political policy which can be responsibly adopted by a government. It is to this kind of responsibility—in which Christians as citizens are inescapably involved—that the mandate and task of the group are directed.

2. It might be said that the real concern of the Churches should be with disarmament alone, and not with defence. There is a danger that in considering defence before disarmament the real pressure for disarmament may be lost. There is certainly a case to be made for concentrating on the ways in which total disarmament can be progressively attained, without discussing, for example, the difference between all-out war and limited war. On the other hand, there is value in studying defence first, not only because of the moral issues involved in it, but also because any step towards disarmament must involve the lessening, or altering, of defence measures which are a primary duty of the government. Disarmament plans which do not keep this in mind are unlikely to affect national policy.

3. The 'moral aspects' of disarmament and defence are not confined to technical questions of weapons. Both defence and disarmament depend upon the state of the world. The best way to end the production of nuclear weapons is to remove the need for them. The settlement of disputes, and the removal of injustices, by peaceful means, are essential steps in any advance towards disarmament. This larger setting must never be forgotten, and there is need for a much broader handling of the problem in another publication. But a more restricted approach may help to focus Christian thinking on the immediately dangerous possibilities of armaments, and the urgency of steps to limit them.

THE MORAL ASPECTS OF DISARMAMENT AND DEFENCE

The primary loyalty of Christians is to God. They are His people, and they seek to live according to His will. But they are not detached from the world; they are involved in its life. In this country they are found amongst those responsible for forming the policy of the nation, and carrying out its defence. All of us owe our livelihood, our standard of living, our democratic freedoms, to the present position of Britain in the world. In so far as we believe we should accept those benefits, we must face the fact that they are dependent upon the use of political and military power. It is therefore irresponsible not to try to understand *'the disarmament problem and defence policy'*.

Earlier generations of Christians could remain a little detached from the cruder aspects of national power. These only showed themselves under threat of war or in war itself. Even then public opinion could exercise a restraining influence, and in any event the damage which armed force could accomplish was limited. All this has changed in our century, and particularly with the advent of nuclear power. We are uncomfortably aware that weapons, and the means of their distribution, are now in existence which, once used, no public opinion could affect, and which might destroy millions of human beings. And we further know that we cannot simply dismiss nuclear power. We must now 'live with the bomb' or with the possibility of its being made. This is why we speak of the disarmament problem, and defence policy *'in the light of nuclear armament'*.

Our study, as Christians, is of *'the moral aspects'*. We are concerned with the will of God in this matter, with what is right and what is wrong in His eyes. At the same time we live in a world full of dangerous possibilities, in which any British government must have a defence policy and the means of carrying it out. Our duty is to make up our minds, as Christians, on the nature of that policy and the character and extent of the means. Only by doing so can we bring an informed Christian opinion to bear upon them. To put it bluntly, we do not believe that our country should be, or can be defended, especially in a nuclear age, without taking the consequences for ourselves, our neighbours, and the whole of mankind into urgent consideration. The whole meaning of 'defence' has been altered. The validity of the concept is in question.

But that last statement greatly over-simplifies the predicament we face. There are many moral dilemmas for our nation, and for ourselves as Christians, because of the forces that are loose in the world, the different, often competing, values which we recognise, and the practical situations which are the consequences of our own actions, or the actions of others. A recent American writer has put our predicament very clearly: 'We come to grips with none of the great problems of human society until we recognise that, unlike problems in Euclidean geometry, they represent dilemmas—that is, they are not problems for which there are a complete set of answers, problems which can be absolutely solved by any reasoning or any device available to us, problems that have solutions devoid of evil. They are, instead, problems to be suffered, to be lived with, to be controlled, to be mitigated, to be gradually reduced to some manageable proportions—to be completely overcome, if at all, only in the fullness of time'.*

This realistic attitude to the issues of defence and disarmament is supported by the report of the section on international affairs at the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954. 'Without forsaking their convictions that all weapons of war are evil, the Churches should press for restraints in their use. Christians in all lands must plead with their governments to be patient and persistent in their search for means to limit weapons and advance disarmament'. There is no possibility of disarmament without 'patience and persistence'. Every Christian must make up his mind on the issues he has tried to understand, and then do all he can to further the policies which he believes to be best in the circumstances.

A CHRISTIAN APPROACH

This is not the place to try to develop a complete theology in relation to nuclear armaments or nuclear war. There are many relevant and challenging passages in *The Era of Atomic Power*. Many Churches have published statements, and the whole matter is at present engaging the attention of the member Churches of the World Council of Churches. The paragraphs which follow simply supply the framework of Christian conviction within which this booklet has been written.

We are concerned with *'the moral aspects'* of defence and disarmament because we believe we live in a moral universe. For the Christian that means a universe in which God reigns,

* Louis J. Halle in *Choice for Survival.*

which is subject to His law, in which His writ runs. A report of the American Churches, quoted in *The Era of Atomic Power,* puts the issue in these words: 'Divine justice and judgment are to be seen in the steady maintenance of a natural and moral order such that men can live and thrive in it only on condition that they yield to it an adequate measure of voluntary obedience, as well as a great hidden body of unconscious adaptations. This order, with the obligations it entails for men, stands fast in peace and war. If men should violate its demands so grievously as to destroy civilisation or even to extinguish all earthly life, the inexorable justice of God would thus be vindicated, not impugned'.

The Era of Atomic Power follows this quotation by saying: 'We may perceive God's mercy accompanying His judgment in the fact that the magnitude of the danger is patent to all reflective minds. Awareness of the danger may arouse men to the effort needed to overcome it. The atomic bomb is already exerting a discipline on men's minds'. We are here concerned with the effort needed to overcome the danger. This implies a determined attempt to discover God's will for our nation. It is a formidable and exacting task for sinful men, but we are not left alone to face it.

We have said that we 'live in a moral universe'. This is true; but a universe created and sustained by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is more than a 'moral order', especially if this phrase is understood to imply an impersonal Rule of Law. The difference between the Christian view of the Realm of God and other religious views is not simply that a higher ethical standard runs through this moral universe, a standard which can be described as 'Christian morality'. The distinctive Christian testimony is that God is *within* this moral order as well as beyond it and controlling it. He is within it as Christ was completely within history, within the human nature in which He was incarnate and within the stuff of the world's corporate life. But He is within it to redeem it by that power which is also beyond it and which lies behind all other power. It is the power in which Christ died and rose again to make available, through the Holy Spirit, the victory of the Cross and all the powers of the world to come. This victory has been made available for believing men. They can enter into it by faith. To quote again from *The Era of Atomic Power,* 'The renewal of the life of the world may be expected to come about through the activity of those who have settled their account with the judgment and doom which hang over our

civilisation by an inward acceptance of the possibility of such a fate and have thereby gained victory over it. Those who have passed through death no longer fear it; life begins afresh as on the first day of creation. Thus can our world be born anew. In this spirit we wish to face the future; in a spirit which we may call believing realism or realistic faith. From such a faith springs a continually renewed and invincible hope'.

This pamphlet contains much that is technical and political. Its suggestions are keyed to the actual possibilities of the national situation. It indicates no short cuts to total disarmament and world peace. It has no illusions of success, no easy optimism about the future. But it claims the faith from which 'spring a continually renewed and invincible hope'. Such hope is prepared to battle against odds, it will work in the dark, it never gives up trying to find something practical to do, because it is geared, not to what may happen, but to what has already been done by God in Christ.

Chapter II

Current Defence & Disarmament Situation

DEFENCE

On the assumption (to be examined later) that Britain and the West have a responsibility to provide military defences against the encroachment of totalitarian régimes—to protect their own way of life, to serve the cause of law and justice, or to keep open the road to an international system in which power is made the servant of law—we cannot as Christians pronounce judgments on questions of defence till we see, at least in outline, the problem facing those given this job to do. Obviously it varies from one area of the world to another, and in what follows three of these areas are chosen to illustrate the nature and diversity of the defence task—Europe, the Middle East and the Far East.

Europe

This is the area where the two great power blocs see the whites of each other's eyes, and face each other, to all intents and purposes, from their own home ground. There is little room for give and take—the western margin of the Eurasian land mass is the West's great bridgehead to it, and the Ruhr is practically in the front line, so that any retreat might be disastrous. On the other hand, the Soviet authorities value the

satellites as their only buffer to keep the West from the Russian homeland, and fear what the satellite populations might do were western forces to cross the frontier. There can be few illusions on either side at the moment that serious military operations—at least on the central or German front—would imply a purpose of dealing something approaching a mortal blow, and would be resisted with great violence. This is the area therefore, which is least likely to breed intentional war. But this fact does not dispose of our difficulties for two reasons—the danger of war by mistake, and the consideration that the apparent stalemate depends on the existence of effective military power on both sides. As to the first, we can recognise areas of instability in Europe, for instance the division of Germany and the curious position of divided Berlin. Events could occur in Eastern Germany or in the eastern sector of Berlin which gravely tempted the West Germans to go to the help of their fellow countrymen. Or again, the situation in such 'neutral' countries as Yugoslavia, Austria or Finland might well tempt or appear to compel Russia to try to add military intervention to political penetration. The second reason, that the defence deadlock in Europe depends on the existence of real and ready power to resist encroachment, needs further elaboration.

Russia could make readily available about sixty divisions in Eastern Europe (excluding her satellites), the NATO powers could have twenty in Western Europe. Russia could reinforce her strength relatively quickly (and to an extent secretly) because she stands in the middle of her web. Her only equal, the U.S.A., must reinforce across the oceans, a slow business, and has to keep an eye on vast and distant frontiers from Norway through the Near East to the China Seas. To offset this, America has established oversea air bases three times nearer to Russian vital cities and installations than any bases Russia can establish for use against the U.S.A. Armed with nuclear weapons, they are designed to deter Russia from exploiting her military advantage.

This is the reason why the official policy of the West, of NATO and of the United Kingdom is to threaten to *initiate* nuclear attack on Russia if she began any serious aggression in Europe. And were nuclear weapons to be abandoned, they would in present circumstances have no coherent military defence left for Europe. Whether Russia would take overt advantage of that, or would keep it as an unspoken but overmastering counter in diplomacy, subversion or the like—'would strip naked the West around the conference table'—is not for

the defence man to judge. He would have little to offer but his resignation, or the modern equivalent of the Charge of the Light Brigade.

This terrible dilemma has compelled authorities to look for means of escape from it. More particularly, supposing that by mistake some fighting broke out in Europe, or circumstances arose (say in Berlin, or Scandinavia or Turkey) where Russia calculated that a lightning action on a limited scale would bring a limited advantage, and tried it, must the West respond by unleashing total thermo-nuclear war? Would the West in fact do so, and if not (for the consequences would be apocalyptic) would the Russians not have succeeded in calling a great bluff? How can the western alliance survive, if allies have to expect each other to be ready to commit suicide to defend the frontiers of one? Does this policy not set a premium on each nation having its own thermo-nuclear weapons under its own control?

These and many other questions have forced the West to review its policy, and to seek one that establishes a reasonable chance of matching smaller outbreaks with a response proportional to the threat. There are those who fear that any weakness of resolution to use the ultimate threat in fact makes war more likely, but others increasingly view an 'all or nothing' policy as a bluff which events might call, or as a totally irresponsible way to handle the awful destructive power of to-day. They believe the only uses of megaton weapons are to neutralise those of the enemy, that is, to deter the enemy from using them or from bringing them to the conference table; and to ensure that if war breaks out there is the strongest possible incentive to the enemy to control and limit its violence since he knows that there is no length to which he can go without fear of equivalent reprisal. They wish to see the West escape from any necessity to use these weapons first.

But then a means must be found to match the great numerical and geographical advantages of Russia on the European front, other than the Great Deterrent. It is not simply a matter of numbers of soldiers, but much more of the massing and moving of heavy equipment, tanks, guns and support aircraft. If we cannot match them gun for gun, can we find a way to neutralise the value of large numbers? This brings in the smaller nuclear weapons*, upon which so much recent research is concentrated. Weapons which had destructive power so great

* For technical information on nuclear weapons see Appendix.

as to prevent the enemy massing large forces, yet not so much as to spread destruction far and wide, could make the difference in resources manageable—weapons which could be fired from guns or in short range missiles or dropped from the air. NATO forces in Europe are now having made available to them the means of delivering such weapons, though at the time of writing the warheads themselves remain under American control, except for the stocks manufactured and possessed by Britain. NATO tactical plans are based on the assumption that these weapons will be used. How can the West use them without starting a process of nuclear war that will not stop short of the biggest bombs? And since many of these weapons at present have a destructive power equivalent to that of the Hiroshima bomb, what limitations need to be accepted for their use? The problem of indiscriminate radiation damage is of course of far less grave magnitude in comparison with the megaton weapons, and research is directed to producing ever smaller warheads and perhaps eventually 'clean' versions. Both developments however probably depend on the ability to conduct further nuclear testing at least on a restricted scale.

There are those who believe that the fact that these weapons are now almost accepted as normal issue to NATO forces requires urgent attention by both political and military staffs and the education of public opinion—to establish limits before the heat of battle, and announce their general intentions for limited war so that the danger of each side pushing up the stakes of battle to the ultimate would be reduced. The official view is that such decisions cannot be taken and announced for hypothetical situations, and that the enemy is better left to guess—and pause. But it is clear that at present the West would not hesitate to be the first to use nuclear weapons of smaller size, and against military targets, in order to halt large-scale conventional aggression. And the reason is that the West has at present no practical alternative for discouraging the outbreak of war.

Why cannot Western Europe and U.S.A. match the Russian forces in Europe with ordinary troops and explosives? To the western forms of society, armies are an impoverishment, and to societies content with the *status quo* they are an unwelcome necessity. In Russian society, they form part of the system of education in citizenship, and Russia is not content with the *status quo*. Western societies emphasise fulness of life for the individual and their governments must respond to the popular will, which dislikes compulsory military service and likes a high

material standard of life. It would add greatly to the budget and trench heavily on the social services to establish armies and their equipment the size of Russia's, particularly as it would be unsafe to abandon nuclear weapons until it could be done with secure equivalence on both sides. Finally, although in manpower, industrial resources and wealth, the West outmatches Russia, on the whole NATO front geography, secrecy, and initiative give Russia the advantage of being able to bring superior conventional forces to bear at any chosen point between northern Scandinavia and Eastern Turkey. In any case a major switch of emphasis cannot be achieved in a day, but would take years, so that in the immediate future we cannot entirely escape from present dilemmas.

The Middle East

While some of the considerations above apply here also, in reality the scene is much more complex. The Arab world has joined the greater part of mankind in the great revolution of our day, the revolution against the dominance of white Europe and its greater offspring. But within the area there are peculiar riches in the form of oil, and the exploitation of these riches in practice depends on commercial connexions with the West, just as European industry depends in the foreseeable future substantially on Middle East oil.

What is it that the West can or should defend in this area? This is a key question to be pursued in other contexts. But the general answer must be that the West desires to defend it from invasion by the West's great enemies because of oil, because of its strategic position across the lines of communication with Asia, and because of the grimness of the prospect of Russia reaching the borders of the African continent. These are the self-interested factors, but they need not be inconsistent with a genuine concern for the welfare of the peoples of the area. Further, the West needs internal stability in the area, which is the basis for trading and the antidote to the tendency of the great powers to involve themselves in its internal conflicts. But the internal stability of the area depends materially on the relationship of the Arab nations to Israel, which is the West's creation, with a highly developed capacity to look after itself, and which feels itself deeply wronged by and is felt to have deeply wronged its Arab neighbours. Both parties have a moral claim on the West to be protected from the other, and to have injustices righted.

What is needed by way of military power to defend the

most defensible of these things? The classical handbook of strategy would suggest that the first task is to man the northern frontiers with Russia through Turkey, Iraq, Persia and Pakistan. That is the object of the Baghdad Pact. They are geographically more easily held than the Central European front, being mountainous and lacking elaborate communications. But local defending troops would in a crisis need rapid reinforcement by air or by sea—more akin to the northern and southern flanks of Europe.

This is no light task, and the threat to use the Great Deterrent to freeze the frontiers is decreasing in credibility. What government would put in hazard the retaliatory destruction of Rome or Paris, London or New York, for the sake of halting troop movements through the Caucasus? Yet in another sense it cannot be a heavy task, for whatever is flown in has to be as light as possible. A TNT blockbuster weighs ten tons, and an equivalent amount of nuclear explosive would be scarcely larger than a cricket ball. Once again the dilemma appears, because of geography, and at present the declared policy of the British Government is to base aircraft on Cyprus capable of carrying nuclear weapons. To stop invasion from Russia's homeland across her own frontiers, from territories in which she can make all preparations at leisure, the West has to transport at short notice, largely by air from a considerable distance, something that can bring military movement to a halt.

In this case, however, the West has not even the theoretical option of manning the frontiers adequately with 'conventional' forces. The stationing of foreign troops in the Middle East, except perhaps in Turkey, has become a political impossibility, and the evacuation of the Canal Zone was followed by the breaking of the British connexion with the Arab Foreign Legion in Jordan.

But are we in fact guarding a door here that no-one has any intention of forcing? If it were wide open, undoubtedly the danger of infiltration from the north would be great, and a firm frontier is necessary to give room for constructive diplomacy behind its protection. But the evidence suggests that at least at the moment Russia is in a position to use less risky methods, and to extend her influence in the Middle East by political strategy, by the supply of arms and technicians, and by clandestine assistance to certain existing forces in the area. These methods cannot be halted solely by military means, although the sense of having powerful friends may encourage a local government to pursue one policy rather than another.

The basic problems are in fact political, economic and psychological, and danger lies in pursuing policies of military defence that seriously embarrass sound arrangements in these other spheres. For instance, the offer to defend frontiers with nuclear weapons is one that may appear very disturbing to nations on whose territory the weapons or their retaliatory counterparts are designed to fall. Only a well understood set of conditions regarding the limited use and size of such weapons could hope for acceptance, and then only when the offer was made by recognised friends who had already established confidence in the genuineness of their concern for the welfare, independence and development of the Middle East. Obviously, the wisest course is to devise means of using conventional forces to the limit before having recourse to nuclear weapons, but the limit is not a very generous one for the reasons given.

In all other respects, for policing the peace between Israel and the Arab States, and for supporting sound diplomacy, the defence forces required by the West fall into the category of instruments for smaller police actions. Here conventional forces are enough, either to participate in a limited United Nations operation or to fulfil the Anglo-American undertakings both to Israel and her neighbours. But it must be remembered that no nation will lightly commit its forces to police duties abroad unless it has the means to protect them if an uglier situation begins to flare up. Behind the police there must stand gradations of strength to preserve 'police' forces from outside interference. To seek to protect them by brandishing the Great Deterrent is a forlorn hope, for it would cause only scepticism.

The Far East

(a) *South East Asia.* New, unsteady nations, burdened with poverty for which no quick remedy is available, many with their troubles multiplying owing to a phenomenal expansion of population, and themselves without any defence resources to withstand serious attack, lie around China's southern perimeter. China, by far the largest nation on earth, proud of her centuries-old heritage and come upon the world's stage at last to assert her power, has at the same time perhaps the world's gravest problem of population. Thus there is a tremendous force of expansion at work along the line of Malaya, Viet Nam, Siam, Laos and the China Sea, with Australasia, Indonesia, Burma and the frontiers of India in the background. Apart from the mainland of China, many campaigns might here be fought which never got near a vital organ of the

great powers, and to this extent it is an area less likely suddenly to touch off a world conflict. But nevertheless it is an area with which the West has very great historic, economic and political ties, and where hope lies of persuading new nations to live within the orbit of the free world.

In so far as this area is one of newly found independence from western domination, yet, in some respects and cases of an independence freely negotiated and not destructive of mutual respect, the desire of the western world is to see it remain free to find itself rather than fall under another great power. The defence problem, then, is similar to that of the Middle East—the guarding of frontiers in such a way as not to embarrass the development of sound political, social and economic policies. It has to be remembered that the people of this area are much less conscious of their need of defence than of their need for food. While it is true that China could deploy substantial military might over a limited front, including possibly atomic weapons of her Russian ally, she has not of herself the military resources of the great powers. But she can choose her point of attack at will around a large circumference where it is not possible to maintain substantial defences permanently.

(b) *The Far East.* If China looks eastwards it gazes upon a different scene, for it watches a front line of Western defence—Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, the Philippines and Formosa, linked to America by the chain of defence installations across the islands of the Pacific. Here are territories to whose defence the West appears irrevocably committed, and through whose seas and skies pass the fleets of the Western alliance. There can be no question at present of a serious head-on challenge by China to these forces, though probing of the off-shore islands is continuous. But it would be foolish to underestimate the speed of Chinese industrial development. Looking a little further ahead, we must reckon with the grim fact that China is the only nation on earth which could regard world war with any kind of complacency. Its low estimation of human life, and its resources of over 600 million people allow its leaders to contemplate the possibility of emerging alone with some kind of future from a nuclear holocaust. Taking these two areas together, China—perhaps supported by Russia—can choose her point of attack at will around a large circumference, where it is not always possible to maintain sufficient conventional defences permanently, either for political reasons or for lack of conventional forces. The defence problem calls therefore, again, for mobility and lightness to allow of rapid reinforcement by air and sea.

With the present limited strength and mobility of available western conventional forces, support from the smaller nuclear weapons might well be necessary in some circumstances. But here is an added qualification. Russia loses no opportunity to remind the people of East Asia that the white races first tried their atom bomb on them. There is thus a very powerful political and psychological reason to reinforce moral considerations, for going to the furthest limit in the supply of airborne forces and equipment, carrier-borne aircraft and the like, to avoid the necessity of nuclear warfare even in its most limited form. In so far as even such preparations prove inadequate, a narrow and strict discipline on the use of nuclear weapons would need to be exercised not only in practice but in preparation.

But there is a contrary political risk. In an area where democratic political institutions have yet to strike deep roots, where much political experimentation and uncertainty will have to be endured over a long period, even one successful aggression by the forces of China would have wide repercussions. Nations which know their own weakness to defend themselves will watch to see that they are on the winning side between the big fellows, and the future of India itself may well depend on its confidence that it need not finally come to terms with Peking.

Summary

In this grave scene, we must try to focus the points of critical decision for the West.

(a) *Preparations for total war.* Some hold that whenever serious outbreaks of hostilities occur in this nuclear age they will tend to grow rapidly and uncontrollably in intensity till all is lost. Therefore it is argued that our best hope lies in being ready, and being known to be ready, to use megaton weapons and all the means of total war in reply to any serious threat by Russia. This is peace by the balance of terror. It involves the West being ready to *initiate* total nuclear war—and this seems to be the official policy as at the beginning of 1959.

This policy raises serious doubts on both moral and technical grounds. As to the latter, it is questioned whether any nation would have the resolution (or foolishness?) to go through with such a policy, and whether it does not tempt the enemy to call the bluff by little stages, each time offering the choice between holocaust and acquiescence. At worst it seems to guarantee that any miscalculation will end in disaster. Those who entertain these doubts would see total war preparations

solely as means to prevent the enemy attempting total war threats, or as a discouragement to him from letting a limited outbreak get out of control. To achieve this end it is not necessary to equal or surpass the enemy in means of total destruction. It is necessary only to possess the capability of causing such serious damage to the enemy that it would never be worth his while to make a total trial of strength. If the West were content with this kind of balance at the 'total' level, it could release resources for dealing less dangerously with lesser outbreaks of hostility. And some of the intractable disarmament problems, reduction of nuclear tests and so forth would become more manageable.

Finally there are in the United Kingdom those who believe that this country, in particular, should rid itself of total war preparations altogether, as a contribution to reducing tension. The task of inhibiting threats of total war by Russia would then fall squarely on America. Whether this would be wise from economic, technical and political points of view may be matters for debate. From a moral point of view there would not seem to be any great advantage. For if America's allies take any part at all in defence against Russia, their plans must rely on someone having the ultimate means to match Russia's highest card if necessary. Otherwise Russia is simply being tempted to play it.

(b) *Preparations for limited war.* In order to counterbalance Communist conventional strength, western policy includes preparations to increase the fire power of its own conventional force by equipping them with small nuclear weapons, and to seek by experiment and testing to produce ever smaller editions of these weapons whose effects will be strictly localised as regards both blast and radiation. This policy still leaves the West in the position of having to *initiate* nuclear war in certain circumstances even if on a limited scale, in order to offset the superiority of Russian conventional forces. But it does create local balances of power which might reduce the danger that one side or the other will be driven or tempted to risk all-out war.

But since Russia also possesses these smaller weapons is it not likely that one side or the other will try to gain an advantage by stepping up the size used in any outbreak of war, until by a leap-frog process both combatants are committed to ferocities neither originally intended? There are obvious discouragements to letting this happen, but they require forethought. Some hold that the best guarantee lies in the definition of war aims and policy—that the West must see that its terms for

a cease fire are clearly enunciated, and that these terms must refer to strictly limited objectives, of a kind which the enemy could accept without humiliation, and certainly very far short of unconditional surrender. Others add that limits must be established beforehand in general terms as regards the size of weapons, types of target and of area in which these weapons might be used, and in terms the enemy can understand. In our democratic societies where public opinion can influence and limit the powers of government considerably, it is important that restrictions of the kind suggested be widely understood. Since the forces of the United Kingdom and its allies are being equipped with smaller nuclear weapons at the present time, these questions arise for immediate decision.

To avoid the dilemma of having to initiate the use of these weapons, as at present, the West would need to increase manpower and equipment for conventional forces very considerably. Every move in this direction provides some relief from danger. The tragic and fateful possibility exists, however, that our society is now of a kind which will prefer not to meet the cost of this relief, but to choose to maintain its material living standards instead. In that case we could not blame 'the government' for our predicament. Yet there is considerable military support for the view that total war or even major hostilities are the least of the deliberate threats which now confront us, and that our chief problem is to meet small but carefully prepared outbreaks of violence in which the use of any kind of nuclear weapon would be inappropriate.

(c) *The cold war.* Just because of the terror of modern weapons, it is all too easy to give dread concentration to questions of their use in isolation from all but purely military considerations. Our survey shows that in fact methods of defence have great repercussions on the whole complex of our relations with other nations, our enemies, our allies and the uncommitted peoples of the world. Defence is not a simple end in itself, but makes sense internationally only as a means to hold the ring for the exercise of wise and constructive foreign policies and the pursuit of disarmament. On both it exercises a decisive influence. Defence plans must therefore be shaped to harmonise with all other responsibilities and relationships towards other nations, and to take a coherent place in the total picture.

In particular, outside Europe the defence dilemma is constituted by the political impossibility of stationing large armies abroad in other people's territory, and the necessity on the

other hand to be powerful in guarding vast frontiers in association with our allies. This dilemma is made more severe by the fact that throughout the greater part of the world the quarrel between Communist powers and the West is not felt to be of primary importance in comparison with the problems of creating new nations and solving their economic problems. Defence policies which attempt to hitch half the world behind our own particular chariot are self-defeating. But a refusal to recognise a defence problem at all is not less obscurantist. An obvious objective would be to enable new nations to defend themselves, by helping them to build up their military potential. The advantage however has to be weighed against their prior need of butter before guns, and the political consequence of putting military power at the disposal of untried and hard pressed governments. Arms in the Middle East and on the offshore islands of China have their own dangers. Here the responsibility for world order and justice, which history lays upon a nation with the power of Britain (though it be much less than once it was) has to be weighed with the proper desire for freedom from tutelage of the people of Asia, Africa and the Middle East. Indeed the whole western alliance is certainly required to devise defence policies which do not oblige its members to be carelessly tough in other people's back gardens, and which recognise that the primacy attached to defence by the West is not shared by peoples who have yet to find a satisfactory national life.

DISARMAMENT

It is characteristic of this whole defence debate that so far we should have considered defence in relative isolation, and in particular without reference to disarmament. Yet our truest defence, certainly against the threat of megaton weapons, lies in successful disarmament agreements. And the possibilities of getting disarmament agreements are substantially affected by the kind of defence preparations we have, as we hope to show. It is worth mentioning first, however, that in Britain defence and disarmament are handled by two different government departments. While co-ordinating machinery certainly exists and it is unlikely that one will propose a scheme of disarmament which defence people regard as dangerous, it is not so unlikely that the other will proceed with defence plans without too much reference to their influence on disarmament.

The point may be put in this way. The situation which favours success in disarmament is one in which both sides

have concluded that their chances of outstripping the other are not good enough to make the vast effort and expense worth while. This is the situation that now arises regarding megaton bombs. Each side has enough to inflict vast damage on the other, and the calculation as to which will survive the better if both strike has become academic in any human terms. So the competition has shifted to the race for means of delivery, faster, more indestructible, more widely based. Even here the chances of destroying the others' capacity to retaliate grow less for certain technical reasons. There is therefore an apparent possibility in this field, by itself, of calling a halt. Each side has, or will shortly have, the means of inflicting intolerable destruction on the other. Why look for more?

On the side of the West one reason has already appeared. The great disparity in 'conventional' forces and the problems of geography outlined earlier mean that the West is pushed into the position, particularly in Europe, of trying to hold the balance by threatening to use megaton weapons if strongly attacked even by conventional forces. This threat works only if the West believes it can do more damage with its megaton weapons than it is likely to receive in retaliation. Hence the fevered race.

Supposing however means were found to stabilise the frontiers, by devising for instance a controllable and rational use of smaller nuclear weapons or by greatly increasing conventional forces, a great deal of the heat would go out of the race for the largest bombs and the means of delivering them. There is no doubt that this race in itself is a source of terror to mankind, a mood in which it is hard to find wise grounds for disarmament. And it is important to remember that it is the West which needs most desperately to win. For so long as it cannot match the enemy at lower levels of armament, it feels bound to achieve supremacy in the ultimate weapons. This is its chief safeguard against defeat. In practice, this means that at present the West is compelled to offer a 'package deal' on disarmament, i.e., one which exchanges nuclear disarmament for a substantial reduction in the conventional and other armaments of the Communist world. Any approximation to a balance at the lower levels would make easier an offer on nuclear arms.

It must be remembered that even then nuclear disarmament has its particular technical difficulties. Mere statement that testing or production of nuclear weapons had ceased, or that stocks were being destroyed or converted to peaceful uses, would hardly convince the other side unless accompanied by

reliable systems of inspection. Scientifically it is now possible to devise means to detect big nuclear tests, without too elaborate machinery, except in outer space, where they are not harmful but very expensive. If small tests are done underground they are not detectable but neither are they harmful. It requires a much larger, but still technically feasible, inspectorate to watch the production of fissile material and see that it does not go to arms production. But there is no way of detecting existing stocks of bombs, which are great on both sides, if either side wishes to conceal them. 'The only instrument for discovering a bomb in a crate is a screwdriver'. The way around this difficulty has not appeared, and in consequence some believe it more profitable to work for a control of delivery systems, aircraft and missiles, which cannot be similarly concealed, and the use of which requires public actions, such as training personnel in their handling. But any such scheme would inevitably involve international control or inspection of all aircraft, civil as well as military.

Somehow, therefore, we have to learn to live with nuclear weapons, at least for many years. If we cannot abolish them, we must do everything possible to bring them under control. And if large steps like this should prove too difficult, then we should be satisfied initially in taking such small steps as are possible.

Hence the need for achieving anything we can in stopping tests, guarding against surprise attack, and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to further countries. Even agreement on a quite limited degree of inspection would be worthwhile to begin to break the vicious circle of distrust and the arms race. And if it is possible to gain agreement in one of these spheres in terms of total war weapons, without waiting for agreement all along the line, then we should clearly settle for this as a first step.

In the negotiation on tests, if agreement cannot be gained for the high degree of inspection required to achieve complete cessation, then there seems much to be said for settling, in the first instance, for the cessation of all tests which can be readily inspected and which are most harmful to health. This would presumably mean all megaton and larger kiloton tests in the earth's atmosphere. It would exclude tests in outer space which are undetectable and the smaller kiloton tests, which can be carried out secretly underground, but at least the worldwide health hazard would thus be reduced.

Similarly, in the discussions for guarding against surprise

attack, much would be achieved if agreement could be reached to establish a warning system capable of detecting preparations to use weapons of total war in default of something more comprehensive. This in itself might ease some of the present tension and suspicion, as well as reduce the chances of a dangerous accident. But obviously a wider warning system must be sought with persistence, including inspection teams on both sides of sensitive frontiers, and agreed thinning out of military power around points of possible conflict.

Apart from reducing the risk of clashes, such measures would help the West to restore the local balances of power, which is probably a pre-requisite for agreements on any general reduction of weapons and forces.

Finally, one still wider aspect of the disarmament situation has been hinted at earlier and now needs a few words of elaboration. There are at present only three powers in the world which possess nuclear weapons. But as soon as any country has a nuclear plant it can technically begin the production of fissile material. Meantime, the West's alliances exist under the shadow of the megaton bomb. Would America or Britain be ready to expose themselves to retaliation by using their megaton weapons in the defence, say, of Berlin, or Austria, or France? Allies are bound to ponder the question. Further, is a strong ally popular who proposes to defend you by uncontrolled use of smaller nuclear weapons on your own frontier? To this extent, nuclear weapons can be an enemy of sound alliances and an embarrassment to their members. Only agreed tactics, and probably only tactics understood by the civil population and accepted as reasonable, can prevent strains between friends, of which there is evidence already.

Furthermore, the uncertainties as to what any ally will do with his H-bomb encourage every country which can conceivably do so to seek to control a weapon of its own. The fact of possession in itself ensures an influential voice in the conduct of foreign policy of the western alliance. If one of the great powers were to renounce such weapons it would not necessarily mean that the others would be shamed into abandoning them too. It would certainly ensure that the power which renounced the weapons would cease to have any influence on their use.

This case has been made repeatedly in the United Kingdom. It can of course equally be made by a number of other powers now coming into the nuclear field. It takes no great imagination to perceive that problems of nuclear defence and disarmament

become increasingly unmanageable as the possessor nations multiply. Nor is this the only menace in this development. The nightmare prospect of many governments, each with its special ambitions and interests, each with its own conception of international responsibility and statesmanship, and all with nuclear weapons behind their policies, is not fanciful but imminent.

A way out, within the western alliance for a start, may be found by placing nuclear weapons as they already exist under international control, that is, under the control of the alliance. It may not be possible for the U.S.A., in its unique position of power, to do this, but for Britain prudence and statesmanship may well continue to suggest such a step towards the ultimate goal, the placing of nuclear power in hands beyond the reach of national quarrelling.

In sum, there are three conditions that favour successful disarmament agreements:

(a) That the parties feel the need to reduce the armament load. Increasing costs, apprehension on health grounds regarding testing, and perhaps above all the apprehension of an uncontrollable proliferation of nuclear-equipped nations, all work favourably at present.

(b) That there is a rough balance of armaments on both sides. A halting of the race for total war weapons, and a closer approximation to balance at lower levels might create more favourable conditions than now exist.

(c) That there are means of verifying that disarmament agreements are being kept by the other side. Systems of inspection and control are fundamental, but of a kind which will allay suspicion that they are being used for espionage or subversion.

Meantime, to deal with the urgent danger of multiplication of nuclear powers, the western alliance can within itself consider the possibility of internationalising its nuclear weapons. For Britain to share its weapons with its European allies—put them in the hands of those 'not responsible to parliament'—appears a tremendous abdication of sovereignty. But is not the appearance false in so far as that kind of sovereignty has long since evaporated with the disappearance of the island fortress and its exchange for the rôle of Europe's bull's eye?

Chapter III

The Christian Approach to the Problem

At the outset it must be asserted that the previous chapter is a part of the Christian approach. Indeed to have the courage to face tough and grim reality is a mark of the spirit of Christ who offended His disciples by taking a darker view of the circumstances and upshot of His own ministry than they were prepared for. The blindness of which He would cure us is both the blindness of comforting illusion and the blindness to the power of God Who banishes fear. We cannot know the questions which God addresses to us at this hour without submitting ourselves to the discipline of discovering what choices are in fact open to us. We are not permitted to select or invent the questions we will answer in this examination, but our obedience lies in discerning what God presents to us for decision in the moment of history in which He has chosen to call us to discipleship. Our choices are limited by past mistakes and deceptions, and there is no guarantee that disaster is avoidable —the only guarantee is that no circumstances can arise in which we may not gladly and confidently submit ourselves to the will of God.

This last sentence leads to one further note. It is part of the secularisation of the times that men think there must be a simple way forward to 'broader sunlit uplands' of historical progress. The Christian, while full of longing and hope, knows that history is not like that. His abiding confidence does not lie in any certainty that history will work itself out to a millennium, but rather that it will remain a struggle of good and evil till the day God chooses to complete His purpose and bring all things to their end. As the Christian seeks his duty in the nuclear age, he will not be surprised to find that there is no way at one stroke to abolish the dangers in which mankind stands. A thousand acts of disobedience create a tangle which demands the patience of a thousand acts of faithfulness to begin to unravel. And that requires a close and detailed study of the knot itself, in all its obstinate reality.

But having tried to do this study in chapter II, we are still left with two Christian duties. The first is to stand back from the close examination of defence problems and look at them afresh in the larger picture of what God has shown us of his purpose for men. The second is to examine again in a little

detail the actual choices before us to see if we can judge between them in the light of Christian duty. The remainder of this chapter is given to those two tasks.

1. It must be evident that in order to get into sharp focus the detailed questions of defence, a number of larger questions had to be begged. Of these, three are outstanding. (a) Is the issue between the West and Communism an ultimate one? (b) What is worth defending? (c) Is power or force a proper instrument for nations to use?

(a) Is the issue between East and West ultimate, unbridgeable and of a kind which justifies defence at any cost? There are negative replies to this question deriving from a plain humanitarianism. Human beings on either side share the joys and sorrows of our human lot, and much of their experience outside political life, in the life of family and friends, in appreciation of the arts or in the daily round of duties, contains at least something valuable that is shared in common. Moreover, both groups of societies wrestle with the one problem—how to design a proper life for men in a society that becomes ever more highly organised in response to the demands of industry and technology. Perhaps the tractor factory manager in Detroit or Coventry has become more like the tractor factory manager in Stalingrad than we realise.

But if we look at this question not simply with the eyes of a sensible and sober human being but in the disconcerting illumination of the Christian gospel the picture is sharper. The crux of the gospel is found where men combine without exception to crucify the Son of God. At that point the argument amongst them as to their relative virtue is silenced, and all have fallen terribly short of their duty and true destiny. The controversy with which the Bible deals is not that between rival human groups, but the controversy in which men are engaged with God. As we wake up to the reality of this conflict, which does not strike us daily in the headlines but is acknowledged by the faithful as lying behind all the headlines, we are driven to penitence rather than self-justification. We are one with all men in our failure, and one also in that Christ died because of us all. This core of our faith calls in question at once the kind of self-righteousness which proclaims the West-East conflict as simply the confrontation of good and evil. It challenges the pretension which easily identifies our cause with God's, or our victory with His. None of our societies is well pleasing to Him—that is the unpalatable fact that our pride would resist to the death.

But the death and resurrection of Christ speak not only of the universal rebellion of mankind, but also of the vast mercy of God Who in condemning also breaks open a door of forgiveness and mercy and new beginnings. Christ died for sinners in order to reconcile them to God. Christians therefore must look beyond conflict to reconciliation. Our resistance to what we believe dangerously wrong in the Communist method and objective must be of a kind that looks beyond the real but partial issues of the moment to the day when our enemies are overcome in a repentance to which we ourselves contribute as well as they. The man who knows how great is his own cancelled debt should make a bad debt-collector.

In terms of defence policy this means that we are governed by the necessity to match a resolute defence of the public interests of mankind with such temperateness and restraint in the means we use as will leave open a door of reconciliation. We are to love our neighbour as ourselves—our allies and the nations that depend on our protection, and moreover we must love our enemies. The relevance of these principles will be examined more closely later.

(b) Is there anything worth defending? From what has been said above it might appear that the international conflicts of to-day have no real significance at all. While they may have less than our pride pretends, they have a good deal more than our laziness and longing for peace and quiet prompt us to believe. God still rules the whole earth according to His purposes for men, bringing down proud empires that threaten man's life, lifting up the weak and outcast, and frustrating all our attempts to impose on humanity a design we find convenient but which falls short of His design.

It is necessary to look closely at the issues of principle that divide East and West. Christians know that there are no final solutions in history, but a continuing journey in which men have to experiment with their changing and developing societies, adjust, modify, repent and begin afresh. This means that history is not something that works to its own fulfilment, a system closed up within itself. But God stands over it, always calling men forward to an unknown destiny which is in His time and hands, at the end of which stands judgment as well as fulfilment.

This kind of political humility and agnosticism involves an open society in which no solutions are final, no power absolute, and one in which a man can appeal over the heads of existing human authority to the only truly humane and ultimate authority of God Himself. Only in such a society is the spirit of man free

to breathe and grow. We know too well how uncertainly such a society is preserved in the West, but at least we can rejoice that the principle is not overtly denied.

The danger of Communist power, on the contrary, lies in its objective of establishing a certain human authority as ultimate beyond which there is no appeal, of imposing a certain ideological solution to our political and economic problems as final when at best it can be only temporary, and thus of trying to fix in rigid form the pattern of man's life according to a human design. This attempt, just because it goes against the grain of the human nature God has given us, leads to inevitable harshness and oppression, as people try to squeeze mankind into a shape unsuited to it. It involves playing fast and loose with truth, lest the truth call in question the accepted ideology. It involves the attempt to imprison the free spirit of man in ways bound in the end to lead to irruption. And it necessarily involves the denial of religious freedom, whereby a man can call in question the justice of the highest human powers in the name of God Who is the ruler of the whole earth.

This profound contemporary battle is one which Christians more than most ought humbly to understand. On the one hand it is familiar to the Bible. On the other, the Churches themselves have not been guiltless in history of trying to impose doctrinal solutions to human affairs at a similar cost. And history has shown that such attempts lead to tragedy, the bitterest of conflicts and great human suffering before they reach their appointed end. To hold back the spread of Communist power to-day, with all the dangers involved, may cost humanity less than the price to be paid later if its empire grows and men then are driven to revolt within it.

The danger of the proud pretensions of Communism also lies in its evoking a counter pride in the West. But there is much in the Communist critique of western society which we ought to heed, and which could be of value once it is dissociated from Communist megalomania. In this sense the West is playing for time, both to put its own house in better shape, and to await the day when the heat and fury of the Communist advance abates, and the terms of the open society can be applied to international relations.

All of this illuminates what we should mean when we call for peace. Peace is not simply the absence of armed conflict, but the state of human affairs in which men are enabled to be true men in their relationship with one another. Aversion from war may be rooted in cowardice and self-regard. Dedication

to peace involves a constant and costly responsibility for our neighbours, that the life open to them may be of the kind for which they were created. This is the potentiality which is worth defending.

(c) We are inevitably faced with the third question. Is power and force a proper instrument for nations to use, especially in the light of the monstrous weight of force now at man's disposal?

Evidently God Who is Almighty, creator and preserver of all, uses His power to achieve His will. He sets limits to our free actions. If we touch fire we are burned and there is no reprieve. Yet within His providential order (without which our lives would not be possible), He has disclosed a deeper mystery, that to meet us in love He is prepared to come totally defenceless as a child, and to give Himself to death at our hands, bearing our evil wholly Himself. For this last reason the Christian Church cannot defend itself by the sword, and its truest glory and defence is the blood of martyrs. The Church exists to be a witness to the things Christ has done, and to conform to them for the sake of all men. But a member of the Church is, as the Bible shows, not less, but perhaps even more than most, also responsible for his neighbour and the ordering of the world's life, the framework of justice and order in which the Church can bear its witness. He is a citizen as well as a churchman—and here is his dilemma. His debt to the rest of humanity is great and his service must correspond.

The function of government is different from the function of the Church, and the tendency of modern secularism to expect from government something other than properly belongs to it is responsible for confusion at this point. The task of government is to order the present life of men, resolve conflicts of interest and direct the political affairs of society with wisdom and justice and without arbitrariness or respect of persons; all that we mean by the rule of law. In order to do this it must have the right and power of compulsion, not only to restrain the criminal but to pursue any coherent policy amidst the clash of a multitude of wills. But its use of force and compulsion are required to be tempered by the necessities of the case, and to be subject to humane laws.

In the international relations of governments, however, we have as yet only the slightest development of law, and until there is in sight some international authority to enforce law, the situation is in the strict sense one of anarchy. Christians with many others are concerned to develop international organs

of law and order and to preserve the authority of such as already exist, the International Court of Justice, for instance. But nothing is gained by exaggerating their present capacities or imagining that at such a moment of spiritual confusion as the present, an international rule of law enforced by international government is just around the corner.

We therefore reckon with the fact that the structures of such international order as exists are built in part on the power and force of states to defend their interests. But there is a long Christian tradition, honoured more often in the breach than the observance, that the exercise of force by a state can be justified only to the extent that the cause it is used to defend is grave enough to balance the evil it produces. There are ways of using police force, even in our domestic society, which would lead to much greater efficiency in stopping the criminal but which would be a grave threat to other valuable things like democratic liberty. And there are degrees of force, now in our hands, to deter the international aggressor which would cause devastation out of all proportion to the gain. The tendency in the two last Great Wars has been to throw in all the force available without restraint, and this as much as anything has called in question the rôle of force in international affairs. Nuclear weapons have brought us to the end of that road, and the rest of this chapter is an attempt to turn back along the path to find a better one.

2. With all this in mind we look again at the practical situation disclosed earlier and ask whether Christian insight can suggest right choices in the delicate matters of defence and disarmament.

TOTAL WAR

We must note with the gravest attention that it is at present the West that is in danger of threatening to be the first to use nuclear weapons, large or small, in certain circumstances, and this because of the situation it has allowed to arise. Just because these weapons, especially in the megaton range, represent the use of force and destruction out of all proportion to any human ends they might serve, a first duty is to work for policies that get the West out of this position with the utmost speed. The possession of megaton weapons is justified only if it is the sole practical means of inhibiting our adversaries from using them and so unleashing disaster on men; and until a system is devised to put this power out of the reach of international conflict.

Here we face our bitterest problem. In order to inhibit megaton attack, each side must have reason to believe that retaliation is a danger to be reckoned with. That means realistically that each must have the will to use these weapons in retaliation in the last resort. And although there are limits to what can be contemplated even in retaliation, to declare and define them is to run the danger of tempting the adversary to exceed them in the belief that by so doing he can secure all he desires. This appears to be a cardinal instance of a problem which cannot 'be absolutely solved by any reasoning . . . .' but instead a problem 'to be suffered, to be lived with, to be controlled, to be mitigated, to be gradually reduced to some manageable proportions—to be completely overcome, if at all, only in the fullness of time'. (See page 4 above).

One important step in this process of control and mitigation seems clear. For the purpose of inhibiting the enemy from using his megaton weapons it is not necessary to be able to surpass him in frightfulness, but only to face him with the certainty of severe retaliation, sufficient to make the adventure too costly. It is not his destruction that Christians seek, but a restraint upon his power to destroy. If it remains technically necessary to ensure that a severe retaliation can be mounted after thermonuclear attack, this is still a smaller task than guaranteeing to match the utmost the enemy can do. To take a risk of this kind holds out the prospect of some alleviation; a lowering of the temperature of mutual terror, a release of resources for more rational defence instruments and so a reduction in the number of situations in which the West might have to choose between surrender and the use of H-bombs.

THE COST IN MONEY AND SOVEREIGNTY

To take the road leading away from the West's present reliance on ultimate weapons may mean reliance for the time being on nuclear weapons in the smaller ranges, not because this is desirable but because it is an inescapable stage on the way, which may offer certain possibilities of reducing present danger. But the objective must be to escape if possible from this necessity also. Here there are two serious obstacles.

First, the building and equipping of conventional forces able to hold situations at present defended with nuclear weapons will cost the West a lot of money. It is a proper duty of Christians to help our society to see the hard choice with which it is presented, that if it wants to escape present dangers it will be expensive. Who is ready to pay? It remains true that

where our treasure is there also is our heart. If we value a rising living standard more than world order we can have it, but probably will enjoy it very briefly.

Secondly, the prospect of escape from so great a reliance on nuclear weapons would be enhanced if the defence effort of the West were more frankly co-ordinated. It is not easy for a country like Britain, which so recently found itself almost alone in resisting tyranny at a critical moment, to forego the possibility that if necessary she could again 'go it alone'. Here Christians, for whom patriotism ought to be ennobled by a larger view of mankind, have witness to give to a God who raises up nations and brings them down, and who is surely calling us to-day to adventure in wider loyalties than those of the nation states of recent centuries. The traditional pattern of national sovereignty is under judgment and an attempt to cling to it may well be one of the reasons for our present dangers.

ESTABLISHING LIMITATIONS

Yet however successfully the lower scales of armament were improved to reduce our reliance on nuclear weapons, the possibility remains that a conflict begun with rifles may extend in violence to the limit if one side or the other sees no other way of avoiding defeat. Again the democratic societies of the West, whose governments are responsible to whole populations, may find it more difficult than an authoritarian régime to switch on and switch off military operations. Christians in those societies can be a stabilising influence, in the midst of fear and passion, to uphold the principle that military operations are directed to maintain the welfare of mankind and not to liquidate opponents of our will and purpose. That insight involves the insistence that the humiliation or unconditional surrender of the enemy must not be our intention, but simply the securing of his adherence to a just pattern of international behaviour. So with any military operation must go clear and public definition of reasonable terms for the return to negotiation. The insistence on this may be one of the best things we can do to provide that if hostilities break out they do not quickly get out of control.

Another possibility exists to inhibit the rapid spread of hostilities from a minor exchange of fire to all-out bombardment. It is to make both military and psychological preparation to reduce the danger. If the public and the enemy know that a policy exists to limit rigidly the military response to an attack, and keep it proportionate to the threat offered, there is less

chance that misunderstanding or panic will provoke an unintentional catastrophe. The existence of standing orders, however veiled their detail, aimed at confining military action as to targets and weapons as closely as possible, would if it were known, be a strong incentive to the enemy to exercise a like restraint, in view of present alternatives. And restraint is a major Christian objective.

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

All that has been said so far concerns the discrimination Christians can bring to public policy. Their choices lie among the politically possible, and their actions are taken by engaging jointly with fellow citizens who share the same political objective. At what point a Christian is called to withdraw from public life, or, more difficult still, to ally himself with a group which aims to frustrate accepted national policy, cannot be considered here, but both raise grave issues of both principle and practicability.

But the Christian has also to consider his life in the Church, and the ways in which the corporate life of the Church impinge upon these matters. Here we are thinking not so much what Christians should advocate, but what the Church and its members should be. For the characteristic contribution of the Church is to exhibit before men a new order, in being, on the earth. It works by precept and example and by the kind of men it nourishes for the service of the world.

In the first place it is a community of people whose hope is surely fixed on God. So they know what it is to say 'Therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed. And though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea'. The very horror of the dangers that surround mankind is a temptation to fear, and passions are roused when so much is at stake. There was never greater need for people who 'have settled their account with the judgment and doom which hangs over our civilisation by an inward acceptance of the possibility of such a fate and have thereby gained victory over it'. Such people ought to be able to go on thinking clearly and wisely when others around them greatly need that service. As a stabilising factor in the community they will have a rôle to play not less important because it is so often hidden in the daily round.

Secondly, the Church is, or should be, the open society *par excellence,* the people who acknowledge the partial and corrupted nature of all our achievements, who wait upon God and look for the new things He calls them to undertake. The

worship and prayer of the Church is the prophylactic of mankind against the disease of political fanaticism.

Thirdly, here in the Church's own life peace should be not so much discussed as exhibited. Here is the place where economic justice is to be manifest as a 'pilot scheme' for men, where the differences of race are brought to harmony. And in general here men can rightly look for a unity over-arching the political curtains of the day, where people in spite of their differences are at one in trusting their one Saviour alone for their safety and by Him are united. The distance we are from this needs no elaboration, even within our own country, let alone internationally; and it is a sober thought that national sovereignty may prove less intractable than denominational separateness. As we seek to minister to a broken world we must do so with the recollection that judgment must begin at the house of God.

Chapter IV

Ways Forward

This pamphlet has attempted to lay out the facts of Defence and Disarmament for Christian judgment. Its character has been based on the conviction that without a sound knowledge of the given situation our judgments, opinions and actions are likely to be worthless. So the first general pre-requisite of any remedial steps to be taken by ordinary men and women is that they should have reasonable access to the facts. The official mind may well hesitate to open up the main debate in public for fear that superficial and irresponsible (or frightened or duped) groups might fetter government freedom to pursue what is considered a wise policy. If that is so, then a function of the Christian community is both to press for treatment as responsible adults and also to contribute balance and stability in the community in assessing the tough factors in the situation. This whole subject is pre-eminently one in which everybody is involved, and no one can afford carelessness or irresponsibility.

A second general requirement which has emerged from earlier chapters is that we should look again at the problem of marrying firmness with restraint in the exercise of national power in international affairs. We are burdened with the guilt and fear of recent unrestricted warfare. We must ask afresh whether that arose from our fault rather than the necessities of the case, and whether it need necessarily ever happen again. This question is raised in greater detail later.

Thirdly, the close interweaving of defence and disarmament policies has been noticed. Certain forms of defence make any moves towards disarmament almost impossible, and certain schemes of disarmament ease greatly the defence problem. This is also elaborated below, but here we ask the general question whether those responsible for defence take sufficiently into their calculations the effect of what they plan on the parallel policies of disarmament. There is danger in pursuing a defence policy too narrowly, and out of relation to other aspects of foreign policy.

Fourthly, any measures that relieve the West from threatening to be the first to use total war weapons or methods claim urgent attention. We must try to get out of this situation with the utmost energy, and ultimately to escape from all necessity to initiate any kind of nuclear warfare. Some of the practical steps for pursuing these ends are as follows :

1. *Total war weapons and methods.* It has been suggested that the first duty here is to accept the fact that the race for supremacy in total war is vain. Once that is acknowledged, a sufficient deterrent to either side embarking on total war as a policy or a threat is, not that they would be defeated but that they would suffer enough themselves to make the enterprise wholly unattractive. This is the present situation of nuclear stalemate. Once it is frankly accepted some of the heat will go out of the race for the means of waging total war. In turn resources would be released for more rational defence equipment.

As a parallel and related step in the Disarmament field, it would then be easier to reach agreement on the cessation of nuclear testing in the larger categories—the ones which are detectable and which involve the greatest radiation risks. And if to this could be added an agreement on measures to detect plans for surprise attack of an all-out kind, this in turn would further reduce the pressure at the defence end to perfect and multiply devices for megaton bombing.

The cessation of nuclear tests is not only, and perhaps not primarily, to be judged in relation to the health hazard involved. The psychological effect in reducing moods and attitudes of fear, and the associated devices to inspect and control the agreement, would represent substantial and valuable gains. And it carries also as a most important consequence a chance to end the multiplication of nuclear armed powers.

In particular, the United Kingdom should watch that her own development of megaton armaments is not dictated by a misguided ambition to hold a special place in the sharing of

defence secrets with the U.S.A. The acceptance of her due rôle in the western alliance may well suggest a switch of resources from total war capabilities to those forms of lesser armament that would allow her to meet threats more soberly and rationally.

2. *Limited war weapons and methods.* This pamphlet has pointed to two factors which make for weakness at the lower levels of armament—the levels which might offer stability with the least risk of blundering into a holocaust. The first is undue concentration of resources on the biggest weapons, and the other is a desire to keep costs down. Costs cannot be allowed to rise without limit, but if our western society faces a choice between comfortable living standards plus nuclear defence, and reduced living standards plus less risky armament, then the Christian has a duty to make his voice heard. A general attack on defence expenditure may lead us precisely in the wrong direction, but a willingness to make sacrifices for an increase in expenditure on sober armaments may be the price of survival.

As a more balanced situation is achieved at the lower levels two disarmament possibilities come into view. In the first place, it is likely to be easier to negotiate a general disarmament plan when the two sides are more nearly in balance at all levels. At the same time the West's reliance even on smaller nuclear weapons would be minimised, thus opening further prospects of specialised disarmament agreement, which in turn could further reduce reliance upon nuclear weapons.

3. *Measures of restraint.* It has been pointed out that these are of two kinds—political and military. As to the first, once it is accepted that there is no such thing as victory in any major hostilities between the great powers, it becomes more than ever necessary never to engage in hostilities with any but limited, and publicly limited, objectives, of which the main one is to halt aggression and restore the *status quo ante* as a basis for negotiation. This form of political restraint needs careful forethought, particularly in democratic countries, and the assurance that military operations are strictly under political control. It will require a widespread determination to turn back from many of the habits of thought of this century in regard to the conduct of war.

Militarily, a policy of restraint requires most careful preliminary planning. Many believe that if it is to be effective in the actual circumstances of hostilities, the West must state in a general but public way the sort of limits which it regards as observable so long as, at each stage, the enemy also observes

them. When both sides are under such strong incentives not to let matters get out of hand, the gravest risk lies in false estimates of each others' intentions, and while secrecy and surprise are traditional military virtues the time has come when they can become the road to ruin.

4. *National sovereignty.* The facts have shown that claims to national sovereignty in defence and disarmament must be greatly reduced, both in relation to our allies and to our potential enemies.

(a) Within the western alliance, Britain has a special opportunity—as a nuclear power but not one of the Big Two—to give a lead in this matter. She can help to halt the multiplication of nuclear armed nations by offering to co-ordinate more closely the whole range of her defence programme with her partners within existing alliances, and by accepting serious restrictions on her own freedom of action. Such a sacrifice is full of risks, but so is its alternative.

Such co-ordination would also simplify and perhaps facilitate the conduct of disarmament negotiations between the two military blocs, because the greater the measure of agreement, unification and common policy in the western world, the easier it is to formulate clear proposals to Russia.

(b) Abatement of sovereignty in respect of our potential enemies is relevant to disarmament. We have to accept, as a condition of a control and inspection system, the stationing at quite sensitive points in our country of officials of potential enemy powers. This is accepted western policy but, if its implementation becomes possible, public opinion will need to be prepared for it.

PERSONAL COMMITMENT

The above steps are all in the sphere of public policies which Christians ought to consider, as plans which they might advocate or support in the political life of our country. But our duty is then only half done. What does the advocacy of such policies, or any other, imply for our own life? Decisions about what others should do are too easy if the consequences for ourselves are shirked.

1. All that has been said of the grim dangers of the situation poses the question: what duty falls to me, as a Christian and citizen in matters of defence and disarmament?

For some the call to service in the defence forces or its reserves, or the industrial and scientific activity which nourishes them, is one which they must face and not try to evade. This

pamphlet may be judged as supplying some of the facts on which a responsible decision rests. The facts will lead some to consider seriously offering a fuller participation than they had before. Others will be led to take a stand of conscientious objection to any participation in defence activity, as an individual act of vocation, come what may. A deep respect for each other's calling and conviction will be the mark of our Christian community, leading perhaps to the discovery that we are each in debt to the other.

Another sphere of decision is that of civil defence. It is noteworthy that the official analysis of the function of civil defence in the nuclear age tends increasingly to a description of it as 'Operation Disaster'. No longer is it thought of primarily as a military or political factor, but as preparing those who will for such humanitarian service as still remains possible in the unimaginable circumstances of nuclear bombing. In such circumstances of horror it is surely the duty and privilege of Christians to give succour to their fellows and seek to preserve such shreds of humanity as survive.

2. Outside the military sphere, Christians have the task of working for the development of the open society which their country claims to defend with arms—to resist encroachments prompted by a narrow concept of defence, to enlarge the area of justice and the respect for minorities, to subject power in society to the rule of law and to protect the weak and powerless. Race relations, the competition of economic groups, the humanising of our technological society all offer opportunities for work, the acceptance of which can alone give moral validity to any defence policy. Perhaps above all, the willingness of our wealthy society to share with the vast impoverished world of Asia, Africa and South America, not only money but our lives, will be a test of our sincerity. For the great rift of fortune between wealthy and poorer lands cannot be bridged simply by economic action, but needs men, skilled in techniques and enriched by competent training, who will go where they are needed and identify themselves in costly ways with the struggles and impoverishments of people who have still to make a future for their societies.

3. Wise judgment and a right understanding of the immense issues posed for men by nuclear power, depend upon qualities that are hard to sustain just because the issues are so grave. The absence of panic, the hard discipline of facing facts however grim with an honest gaze, and freedom from narrow and unworthy passions—and all this in a temper of unyielding concern

for human welfare—these are attitudes which man alone can scarcely command. But they are amongst the gifts of God to those who wait on Him, and live their troubled lives in the constant light of prayer.

Appendix

Technical Information on Nuclear Weapons

This appendix has been included for one purpose only. There is danger in talking about 'nuclear armament' without knowing what weapons are now available or projected, and what their uses are from the military point of view. However much we may abhor preparation for human destruction, we cannot work for its abandonment without understanding something of its character and purpose.

Nuclear Weapons

The first atomic bombs dropped at Nagasaki and Hiroshima were of 20 and 15 kilotons respectively. A kiloton is equivalent to 1,000 tons of conventional high explosive. These bombs were more than a thousand times more powerful than any previous weapons. There is, however, a practical limit to the size of such atomic (fission) bombs.

Later, the thermo-nuclear or hydrogen (fusion) bombs were a thousand times more powerful again, i.e., one million times more powerful than the biggest conventional weapons. They have been measured in megatons, each equivalent to 1,000,000 tons of high explosive. (A train of waggons containing the equivalent in T.N.T. of a 10 megaton weapon would stretch across the Atlantic!) Only problems of engineering and transportability limit the maximum size of such weapons, but more recently thermo-nuclear bombs have been developed less than a megaton in power, and possibly much smaller than the largest atomic kiloton weapon.

The smallest of the fission weapons is now probably less than one kiloton in power. Further testing and development is intended to lead to weapons of a small fraction of a kiloton. Their military attraction lies in their smallness in comparison with equivalent T.N.T. bombs, making them easy to transport or deliver.

The larger weapons are sometimes called 'strategic' weapons, because of their capability for use in attacking the enemy's strategic back areas or homeland. The smaller ones are some-

times referred to as 'tactical' atomic weapons, because they could be used against troops, airfields, ships, and communications nearer the front line of the land fighting. No clear distinction between these types has, however, yet been drawn—at least officially and publicly.

Direct Effect

The *direct effect* of a nuclear explosion is a combination of heat, blast and radiation resulting from the emission of neutrons and gamma rays which shoot out in all directions. The radius of this direct effect depends upon the height of the burst. At a certain height an 'air burst' could cause the *total* destruction of buildings and a very high mortality rate of people inside them, out to radii approximately as follows:

(a) For a fractional kiloton weapon—a few hundred yards
(b) For a 20 kiloton atomic weapon,
Hiroshima type —one mile
(c) For a 10 megaton type —four miles

There would, in each case, be *heavy* damage and casualties out to radii about twice this distance, and *light* damage of buildings and sufficient effect to cause bad fires and heavy casualties to exposed people out to radii three times as great.

Fall-out Effect

In addition, there are three types of *fall-out* effect, again depending upon the height of burst. The effect is at its worst if the fire ball touches the ground, i.e., a 'ground burst'. It results in the scattering of radio-active particles as follows:

(i) *Local or immediate* fall-out effect, which spreads over the ground down-wind from the explosion to approximately the following distances, depending upon the strength of the wind and the type of ground under the explosion:
(a) For a fractional kiloton weapon—about a mile
(b) For a 20 kiloton weapon —several miles
(c) For a 10 megaton weapon
—several hundred miles
This fall-out will reach the ground between one hour and one day after the explosion, varying with the distance of the fall-out effect. This local fall-out effect is non-existent in the case of 'air bursts'.

(ii) *Tropospheric or intermediate* fall-out effect, which reaches the ground in a few weeks, and is distributed in a band extending around the world at roughly the

latitude of the explosion. The relative amounts so distributed by the various sizes of weapon are very roughly in the following proportions:

(a) For a fractional kiloton weapon—1
(b) For a 20 kiloton weapon —200
(c) For a megaton weapon —20,000

This effect will take place with both air and ground bursts, but it is considerably greater in the former than in the latter.

(iii) *Stratospheric or delayed* fall-out effect, which settles slowly at a rate of about 10% per year, and covers the whole world, although not completely uniformly. The amounts, as compared with the proportions shown in (ii) would be very roughly:

(a) For fractional kiloton weapons—0
(b) For 20 kiloton weapons —0
(Explosions not large enough to reach the stratosphere)
(c) For megaton weapons —60,000

This effect takes place in both air and ground bursts and is again considerably greater in the former than in the latter.

The above figures are for 'dirty' weapons, i.e., those in which no special effort has been made to bring about the explosions by the maximum amount of fusion product and the minimum of fission product. It is understood that, if desired, megaton weapons can be made up to about 95% clean, in which case the radioactive effects shown in (ii) and (iii) above would be divided by 20. But neither the fractional kiloton nor the 20 kiloton weapons have as yet been made 'clean'.

Possibilities of Discrimination in Use

The degree to which such weapons can and cannot be used with discrimination, particularly as between armed forces and civilians, and as between belligerent countries and neutrals, varies tremendously according to which weapons are used, at what targets they are directed, and how high they are burst.

A *fractional kiloton* air burst directed against a military target in the open, such as troops, an airfield, a line of communication, or a ship, would cause direct blast and radiation damage out to a radius of perhaps 600 or 700 yards, would cause no local immediate fall-out effect, and almost negligible intermediate fall-out effect, and no delayed fall-out effect. If, on the other hand, it were directed at a centre of population,

civilian casualties would be very considerable. If it were a ground burst, the direct effect would be substantially reduced, but there would then be local fall-out effect down-wind for as much as a mile, which, if on open ground, would contaminate it for perhaps a few weeks, but if falling over a centre of population, would cause heavy casualties to exposed civilians.

A *20 kiloton* air burst, directed at military targets in the open, outside centres of population, would cause direct damage out to a radius of about three miles, no local fall-out effect, a small amount of intermediate effect, and no delayed fall-out. If directed at a centre of population, civilian casualties would, however, be comparable to Hiroshima (i.e., about 100,000). If burst in contact with the ground, direct damage would be substantially less, but there would then be a local fall-out effect down-wind to as much as five miles, with results depending, again, on whether the ground was open or populated.

A *'dirty' megaton* air burst would do direct damage out to about twelve miles radius, destroying any villages within this radius, even if in the open, would cause no local fall-out but substantial intermediate and delayed fall-out effect. Directed at a city, even the largest would be virtually wiped-out. If burst in contact with the ground, the direct damage would be reduced to about nine or ten miles radius, but a local fall-out effect would then spread down-wind for about two hundred miles, causing casualties to any civilians who exposed themselves within a week or more.

A *'clean' megaton* weapon would cause almost as much direct damage, but the intensity of the various fall-out effects would be about one-twentieth of the 'dirty' weapon.

Against *land targets* it is therefore theoretically possible to use fractional kiloton weapons with considerable discrimination, both as between armed forces and civilians, and as between belligerents and neutrals. With the 20 kiloton weapon, some limited degree of discrimination also seems theoretically possible. With the megaton weapon, however, there is clearly little scope for discrimination, either as between armed forces and civilians, or as between belligerents and neutrals.

Against *sea and air* targets, there is clearly more scope for discrimination, though with the larger and dirtier weapons there is no escape from the intermediate and delayed fall-out effect which pollutes the atmosphere in the same way as the larger tests do now.

But even the fractional kiloton weapons used against armed forces on land, at sea, or in the air, have a degree of indis-

criminate effect (apart from the very small pollution of the atmosphere), in that their direct radiation effect is bound to impose some risk of long term genetic deficiency on any casualties who do not die.

Finally, much depends, of course, upon the numbers of weapons used. So far as world wide fall out effect is concerned, it will be seen from the relative figures given that megaton weapons—even if 95% 'clean'—are many times more harmful than the smaller 'dirty' weapons.

Means of Delivery

Nuclear warheads are designed to be dropped from aircraft either directly or in the form of self-propelled missiles, to be carried in missiles released from the ground, aimed at aerial or ground targets, and from ships. In all cases military advantage is gained by the continual search for lighter warheads and more accurate and mobile means of delivery.

Conventional Weapons

There seems only limited scope for science to lighten the warheads of conventional weapons (i.e. those of high explosive and T.N.T.) but much scope for improving the accuracy and mobility of their means of delivery. Moreover, developments such as atomic propulsion offer prospects for more rapid movement of conventional forces to any threatened area.

Non-nuclear Methods of Mass Destruction

Science has uncovered other means of mass destruction than nuclear weapons. Biological and bacteriological agents, comparatively cheap to produce and small in quantity, could produce great casualties and crop damage. Practically, however, these agents are difficult to deliver and slow in taking effect, and not likely yet to present great military temptations. They would, of course, be wholly indiscriminate. Chemical gases are available but are very bulky in comparison with nuclear equivalents as means of mass attack. Their attraction militarily lies rather in their use to contaminate sweeps of ground in such a way as to halt the advance of large conventional forces; or as quickly dissipating gases aimed at advancing troops. The use of biological, bacteriological and chemical weapons is prohibited under the Convention of 1925, but the applicability of this Convention to nuclear weapons has never been decided.

The members of the group are:

THE REVEREND ROBERT C. MACKIE, D.D. (Chairman)
Chairman of the International Department, the British Council of Churches

THE REVEREND ALAN R. BOOTH
London Secretary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

REAR- ADMIRAL SIR ANTHONY BUZZARD, Bt., C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.
Director of Naval Intelligence, 1951-1954

MR. GEOFFREY DE FREITAS, M.P.
Under-Secretary of State for Air, 1946-1950

THE REVEREND NORMAN GOODALL, D.PHIL.
Secretary of the Joint Committee of the International Missionary Council and World Council of Churches

SIR KENNETH GRUBB, C.M.G., LL.D.
Chairman of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs

MR. MICHAEL HOWARD
Lecturer in War Studies, King's College, London

THE REVEREND DANIEL T. JENKINS
Christian Frontier Council. Professor of Theology (part-time), the University of Chicago

MR. KENNETH JOHNSTONE, C.M.G.
Chairman of the Christian Frontier Council

MR. ROY LEWIS

THE REVEREND EDWARD ROGERS
General Secretary of the Christian Citizenship Department, the Methodist Church

THE REVEREND CANON H. M. WADDAMS
General Secretary of the Church of England Council on Foreign Relations 1945-1959

THE REVEREND KENNETH SLACK, M.B.E.
General Secretary of the British Council of Churches

THE REVEREND D. ALAN KEIGHLEY (Secretary)
Joint Secretary of the International Department, the British Council of Churches

Other Publications

The following publications on this theme may also be obtained from the British Council of Churches:

The Era of Atomic Power (1946). Report of a Commission appointed by the British Council of Churches. S.C.M. Press. 2s

The Church and the Atom (1948). Report of a Commission appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York to consider the above report. Church Information Board. 4s.

The Churches and the Hydrogen Bomb (with supplement). Statements by the World Council of Churches and the British Council of Churches from 1950 to April 1958, with the exception of those in the following pamphlet. 4d.

Atomic Tests and Disarmament. Statements of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs and of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, July-August, 1957, 6d.

Christians and the Prevention of War in an Atomic Age—a Theological Discussion. A provisional study document of the World Council of Churches, 1958. 2s. (Report of a Commission whose Chairman is the Principal of Aberdeen University).

Coexistence and the Conditions of Peace, Sir Kenneth Grubb, C.M.G., LL.D. Burge Memorial Lecture 1957. S.C.M. Press, 2s.

Ethical Problems of the Atomic Age. C. F. von Weizsäcker. Burge Memorial Lecture, 1958. S.C.M. Press, 2s.

THE CHASE LIBRARY
WESTCOTT HOUSE
CAMBRIDGE

CHRISTIANS AND ATOMIC WAR

At the meeting of the British Council of Churches held on October 20th-21st, 1959, the following statement was received and its publication authorised. This does not mean that the Council approves the statement save as a contribution to discussion.

THE group responsible for the pamphlet *Christians and Atomic War* has reviewed its work in the light of events in the last six months. It considered such criticisms of the document as it had been able to collect. Some of these evidently arose because people had wished and expected a different kind of document, one covering the familiar ground of Christian attitudes to war in general. Others remarked with more justification that the balance of its contents left too little room for the presentation of the Christian foundations underlying the group's thinking. Of this the group became aware as it worked, but believed it should at that stage adhere to the primary task of its terms of reference: 'to give continuous study to the moral aspects of the disarmament problem and of defence policy in the light of nuclear armament, with a view to advising the Council from time to time on these matters'. The group, suitably enlarged, now proposes to address itself to examining these foundations.

Nevertheless, recent events confirm our view that the document's main recommendations remain extremely relevant and urgent, and a good deal more radical than some of our critics seem to have appreciated. Mr. Kruschev's recent initiative on disarmament only underlines the importance of devising practical steps to reach the goal which he, as well as the western nations, is now publicly committed to reach. In our view, Christians must continue to grapple with the immediate realities of the struggle for power, for it is in this situation that the next steps have to be taken. To describe where we want to get is no substitute for plotting our way from where we now are.

Therefore we wish to restate our main recommendations:

(i) That the West must and can get itself rapidly away from the position of threatening to be the first to use weapons of total war;

(ii) That the present reliance of the West, in the case of more limited violence, on initiating the use of 'tactical' atomic weapons of smaller calibre, must and can be reduced;

(iii) That both these steps may well demand an increased defence expenditure, and that the wealthy West must face this cost honestly as a contribution to nuclear disarmament;

(iv) That a war of unlimited destruction is totally unjustified in any circumstances, and that means must be secured for keeping any necessary force rationally adjusted to an attainable human end;

(v) That disarmament waits upon the devising of a control system acceptable to all parties concerned;

(vi) That the imminent danger of the spread of nuclear weapons to more nations in the world requires of Britain that it consider a derogation of sovereignty and the placing of its nuclear armaments under the joint control of its European allies in return for their willingness not to proceed to nuclear manufacture of their own.

These recommendations are offered for debate in the conviction that questions of this kind cannot be avoided by Christians who wish to make any positive contribution to the prevention of war. But we are equally anxious to be instructed further by our fellow Christians and welcome comments from those who have studied our work.

Copies of this leaflet can be obtained, price 1d. each, (plus postage) from the Publications Dept., British Council of Churches, 10, Eaton Gate, London, S.W.1.

The pamphlet "Christians and Atomic War" can be obtained from the same address, price 2/2d. post free.